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We should like to ask members and friends of N. A. S. S. W. to take a more active interest in the Bulletin. If you have an article or a suggestion regarding a paper we might publish, SEND IT IN. Manuscripts should be addressed to the Editorial Chairman and can be accepted for publication only on condition they are not being published elsewhere. They should be typewritten doublespaced and there should be two carbon copies. Authors of papers accepted will receive five copies of the issue containing their article.

THE SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE CHILD'S SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT *

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Modern education aims to achieve a well rounded development of the whole child. It is not enough to inform him of our cultural heritage or merely to develop skill so he can seek out knowledge. Modern education is concerned that the child should be helped to live a satisfied, productive life through each stage of his development. The key person in achieving this end is the class room teacher. There is a wide variation in the training and personal aptitude our American teachers bring to this job. Even our most competent and interested teachers can not be expected to undertake the adjustment and guidance of all of the children alone. Some they cannot understand and that is to be expected since there may have been nothing in their particular education or experience that would help. These are the problems with which they often ask the help of school social workers when it is available. It is my purpose to describe the school social worker's contribution to the child's social development.

I should like to consider the role of the school social worker in its relationship to the school, the child, his family and his community. Since I am a practitioner myself, it occurred to me we might start at a different point for this discussion. Instead of my trying to formulate for you what I think goes on in a school social worker's job, we might start with some children who have been helped and see what happened. I have selected four cases which were referred by teachers with the statement they could not handle the situations alone. Although the children vary widely in age and behavior, they all presented some difficulties in social adjustment, using the term in its broader sense. These children's problems are not profound or unusual. I hope, if such is possible, they illustrate the run of the mill cases which are referred to school social workers all the time. Children are not necessarily referred by teachers. Parents, community people or the children themselves often ask for the help of school social workers.

Before I tell you about the children I should say that not all of a school social worker's time is given to direct service to individual children. There are conferences with school people, teachers, administrators, doctors, nurses, and even the janitors about general matters to which it is felt the

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social worker brings her own special contribution out of her training and experience. There is work with groups of parents in P.T.A. or other organizations, or in study groups sponsored by the schools. There is a wide variety of affiliation with other community social workers toward the goal of fitting the school into the community's whole plan for service to children and helping the community to provide other services which are needed. Finally there is general participation in the field of both education and social work. In my opinion the crux of the school social worker's job still lies, however, in her day by day case work service to individual children. The validity of the job and its proper place in the school can be tested out in the study of this direct service.

With our first little eight year old whom we shall call Peggy and the next child, Judson, I shall try to show how the school social worker co-operates with the teacher and finds her place with parents.

PEGGY

The teacher in the private school where Peggy's mother works at cleaning, said that Peggy was just stubborn and Mrs. Mazurak ought not to let her get by with staying out of school after vacations or week-ends as she had become accustomed to doing. Many times they had talked about it and decided what Mrs. Mazurak would do, and then it would happen again. She would go off to work early and the next thing the school office clerk was telling her Peggy did not come. So one day last December Mrs. Mazurak took Peggy to the public school. Mrs. Mazurak figured that the children in their neighborhood went to public school so Peggy could too. Maybe she'd get to playing with other children after school as she had never done. All went well till vacation and Mrs. Mazurak was probably saying to herself that it was a good move. when the day after New Year's the public school clerk phoned. Peggy did not come to school. Mrs. Mazurak appeared at school immediately after she finished work. The teacher, Miss Brown, couldn't figure out the cause of the absence. Both she and Mrs. Mazurak thought that Peggy liked the public school.

After consulting her principal, Miss Brown asked to talk with the school social worker. She said she thought she could help Peggy if she came to school, but how was Miss Brown to get her there? She remembered another similar situation where many difficulties arose after the child had been allowed to stay home sometime before the problem was reported. She was eager to have help promptly this time.

In the customary fashion, the school social worker studied information available before trying to help with Peggy's problem. Information was obtained from Peggy's school record, her health record, the school nurse,

and the private school. Social agency information was available to the school social worker also. In this instance it consisted of a report from the local private family and children's agency. Peggy had attended their day nursery when she was five. The agency case worker said that in the nursery Peggy kept asking the same questions over and over. She was embarrassed when she wet her bed and she did not want to eat what was served. After two months of irregular attendance Mrs. Mazurak withdrew Peggy.

Mrs. Mazurak was glad for the help of the school social worker when Miss Brown arranged it. "Shure an' something's got ter be done or there'll be the law on us." She told how she had left home in Ireland at sixteen coming to New York where she worked in service for twenty years before she married. Mr. Mazurak was born in this country of Polish parents. Mrs. Mazurak looked old to be the mother of a small child. Her front teeth were missing and she had a stoop to her shoulders. When Peggy came along she said it had not seemed natural for her to be having a baby. It was hard, too, because there wasn't enough money unless she worked. She said to explain, "A man has to have a few drinks now and then." There were make-shift living arrangements and changing plans for Peggy's care throughout her pre-school years. Mrs. Mazurak went on, "but he's a gude mun and shure an' it was bad fer me when they took 'im in the Army." As she described ineffective and ill-advised methods she used with Peggy, Mrs. Mazurak gave the impression of having few personal resources and little imagination to bring to her immediate problem.

The worker went to see Peggy the next morning as she had arranged carefully with the mother. Looking chagrined Mrs. Mazurak disappeared and was overheard plaintively begging the child to come out. She returned to say, "Aw shure an' she's under the bid and I can't git her." The worker suggested going into the room next to where Peggy was hiding and drummed up talk about the Brownies in which she had heard that Peggy was interested. The child crawled out slowly and soon she was talking with the worker, hesitatingly to be sure, and Mrs. Mazurak went off to work.

Peggy thought it was all right for her to be alone in the day time because "if I'm here mama comes home early anyway." It was hard for Peggy to eat with the other children in the public school. She had never done that before. "And that boy, Tony, he's *fresh*." Most important of all, Peggy had to do "baby arithmetic." In the private school everyone did the same kind. These were her reasons and they were all considered seriously by the worker and the teacher, but maybe there was more than Peggy could tell. It was a big strange world in which to be alone. It would have been nice just to stay home and have mama, even though she was pretty troubled herself these days. The social worker thought that Peggy needed

a secure relationship with someone at the school who did not have to be shared with twenty-two others. The worker met Peggy at school for two days and then saw her at some time during the day for two more days. After that it was tapered off quickly with the teacher taking hold, using the additional understanding that she now had. The social worker continues to see Peggy now and then but only in a friendly conversation in the hall.

Other things that needed attention were effected: iron to cure the mild secondary anemia that the doctor found Peggy had; and the Brownies—when Peggy had become acquainted with some little girls who introduced her. The art teacher became “next to the nicest teacher I ever had.” (Miss Brown was the “nicest.”) Peggy had had no experience with some art media available and although she was not creative at first she became increasingly able to express her ideas in this way. There was something to having Peggy in a school with the children of her neighborhood instead of with children she never met outside of school. To explain this Peggy said just recently, “You know there are 150 kids up my street and they all come to this school!” Peggy is beginning to feel she belongs to them. They are her natural companions.

Seeing what had happened Mrs. Mazurak was most grateful and looked to the worker directly for suggestions which she could use to build up Peggy's confidence. Would she turn to an agency to discuss the training of her child? Probably not, any more than she used the case work help offered her at the time that Peggy was in the Nursery. She does not know that she had kept Peggy out of school many of her own Thursday afternoons off because she needed to have someone with her, but she stopped doing this when she was asked to do so. She thinks that when “Papa” gets home finally one of these days he will know the answers. In the meantime it seems all right to Mrs. Mazurak to ask the worker a few things. “You have had more childrens around than I have.”

“Papa” may ease the situation but probably there will be other things in Peggy's growing up which will need a little straightening out; and in my experience, people like Mrs. Mazurak find it easy and natural to go back to a school social worker when necessary. A friendly contact has been established between the mother and Miss Brown. Mrs. Mazurak thinks it is “nice” the way Miss Brown has her come in every few weeks to “hear how things are going.”

For a few months Miss Brown told the worker the “news” about Peggy every week or so when they met at school. Should one say that the social worker was following up on the case? Or was the teacher following up with the social worker? In this kind of situation it is a sharing of responsibility. The worker wants to keep in on the planning and that is what

the teacher expects her to do. Eventually, however, the worker will stop her inquiries and then it is to be hoped that Peggy's teacher, whoever she may be at the time, will continue to watch for any signs that special supplementary help is needed again. Subsequent teachers will know of the social worker's interest this year because the referral is noted on Peggy's cumulative school record.

In general the service offered on this problem might be considered illustrative of the way we work with teachers and parents in our particular setting and that is not unusual. The reasons that bring a child to the school social worker, however, are as widely varied as one can imagine. People are never alike, whether they be school-age children or teachers or parents. What is needed for them is widely varied. So also is the way that teachers and parents use us. Therefore, it seemed best to describe several cases briefly rather than present one in detail. Judson, who is just six, and is the next subject of our discussion, comes of a quite different background.

JUDSON

Late one afternoon this spring, Miss Swanson phoned to ask if the social worker would be able to see Judson's mother, Mrs. Monroe. They had just been having another conference and were getting nowhere when it came to the teacher's mind to suggest the social worker might help out. Admittedly Miss Swanson was getting irritated with the way Judson seemed to be putting his class into a muddle all the time. When the worker went in to see Miss Swanson and observe Judson, it was evident what she meant. Here were twenty-eight first graders, many of them active and needing special attention of one kind or another. Judson was not with them in spirit. He would put his big foot into the aisle nonchalantly and someone was always coming down just then. He would get up and go out and make plenty of noise when he returned considerably later. He grinned and grinned. Never did he really do what the group was working on at the time. Anytime he could command an audience of child or adult, Judson would be off with his low drawling voice on a most fantastic yarn and Miss Swanson had decided there was no way of knowing whether there was a grain of truth in what he said or not. His desk "was jammed full of trash," as the teacher complained. On the playground there were punches as Judson's big hands seemed to get accidentally into the wrong places and real tussles with tiny boys who would have preferred to avoid Judson.

The Monroes live in one of the lovely estates up north in the town of Greenwich, which appealed to Dr. Gavrilowicz and his committee. Like many men in the New York suburban areas, Mr. Monroe goes to business in the City. He leaves at 8 A.M. and returns at 7 P.M.

Mrs. Monroe is charming and attractive. After the social amenities, she said, "If you don't mind, I have some things I would like to ask before we start. Are you a full-fledged social worker? I was on the Board of the Houston family agency once. Do you teach also? Well, if not, are you a teacher? Did you talk with Miss Swanson? And did you talk with Judson? Oh, I see, you thought that might be confusing to him but you do know him. All right. Now where do we start?" The social worker thought that Miss Swanson wanted to help Judson to adjust himself more effectively in school, and no doubt, Mrs. Monroe could help us understand him better.

Within five minutes Mrs. Monroe was admitting with tears in her eyes that if there was one thing she "could not stand it was a *spoiled* child." Judson had not been spoiled but it always seemed that someone was going to say he was. (Inference—Miss Swanson, too.) Mrs. Monroe said, "At home he never puts things away. Crayons mark up the walls. It's a struggle to get him ready and out to the bus in the morning. He's fussing either because there is no one to play with or because the few children he has for company don't like him, telling tales to explain away anything 'till really I am nearly frantic. They're lies. I know they are. Do you think I should have a psychiatrist for him?"

The social worker wondered whether everyone concerned might not first initiate a study to learn what Judson had in his mind, what it was normal to feel and want at his age, and whether perhaps some of these things couldn't be arranged. This study led to some clues. Judson wanted company. If there were no children to talk to at other times he would have to talk to his classmates in school. He wanted activity. He needed responsibility. Hence they arrived at a plan. He was introduced to a closely supervised play group of boys after school twice a week; day camp for the summer was planned even though it meant leaving the beautiful countryside. He was given full responsibility for some gold fish, looking forward to a puppy when Judson had demonstrated that he could take care of the fish. Real, important jobs were arranged at home and in school for which Judson was actually needed and could receive recognition. A regular plan for Mrs. Monroe to get out more was suggested now that gasoline and domestic help are more plentiful. She was helped to see the importance of accepting "that Judson is big now."

What was it that Judson had to say when he came home from his first afternoon at the play group? "I took care of my *own* swimming suit, and I walked to the bus at *exactly* five o'clock. I saw what time it was *myself*." Supper was his favorite, frankfurters and potato salad, and it was the pleasantest one in a long time, Mrs. Monroe said.

This is only a beginning. Maybe Mrs. Monroe will need a more thorough-going kind of service sometime in order to help her son but she has accepted the value of freeing him to be with others, boys his age and men leaders. They can probably help him learn some of the things we have to do to get along with our contemporaries more easily than she herself can teach him.

Miss Swanson? At her conference with the social worker she took her own cues. Disgustedly, she said she should have *thought* before she let herself get irritated with Judson. Naturally he had his reasons, too. Frankly she didn't like spoiled children either. The next day with her tongue in her cheek she asked Judson to do an errand in the other building and he was back in three minutes, mission completed. She thought that she wasn't very good at it but even first graders could be taught to help each other learn to grow up and now was the time she would start a program aiming at self-direction. A week later when one of Miss Swanson's own spoons accidentally got sent down to the kitchen, Judson on his very own initiative, retrieved it.

To illustrate a point I mentioned earlier, that parents differ, consider how Mrs. Mazurak gave no thought to the professional identification of the social worker as long as she was helpful, and how Mrs. Monroe asked for credentials first thing. Note also how little capacity Mrs. Mazurak seemed to have for insight into her problems and how much Mrs. Monroe probably could muster if necessary. The social worker's job differs as widely as the people who use her service but always it has to do not only with the surface of the problem but also with the reasons that lie beneath. This is a trained social worker's particular area of competence. No matter how little the individuals concerned may be able and eager to understand the underlying difficulties, the social worker must try to understand them in order to make her helpfulness intelligent.

Miss Brown and Miss Swanson are quite different people, too. They both have many personal resources for helping children. Miss Swanson may have picked up some little understanding of herself in her conferences with the social worker regarding Judson. Good, if she did. Whereas the social worker is not responsible for helping teachers with their own basic personal problems as such, in the process of mutual work in behalf of individual children, some help may be given to a teacher as she functions with her group in school.

These cases were chosen on the basis that the teachers felt they needed help but occasionally social workers meet teachers or administrators who do not want it. Remembering her goal as the fullest possible development

of all the children the social worker must then try to understand the reasons behind this state of affairs. Looking first at herself, she must consider whether there has been anything in the way she has worked with that school which made for friction. Or is there anything in the way in which her department offers social work service to the school that contributes to difficulty. If not, then, assuming that the individual teacher's real interest is the development of her children, the social worker can consider the matter with the teacher in an objective fashion.

With the next two children I want to tell you about briefly, Comfort and James, the essence of the social worker's contribution lay in her direct work with the children. They had special emotional needs of their own which were partially met by the social worker herself.

COMFORT

Last spring Mrs. Andrews told the school social worker, "Someone really ought to find out what is troubling Comfort. She is just about as nice a little eleven year old as one could find, but the boys are after her all the time calling her 'black nigger' or 'Tojo's wife.' Comfort is upset and it is a shame she has to suffer so since she probably has other things to worry over." It was well known at the school that Comfort's mother was mentally ill. Mrs. Andrews liked Comfort very much and she had tried and tried to "reach" the child but Comfort never talked easily.

Years ago another school social worker had helped the family to get case work service for their family problems. It was concluded that there was very little that could be done because Mr. Cicco preferred to keep his wife at home and manage the best he could in his own way. At the time Mrs. Andrews referred Comfort, there were two boys in service, two adolescent boys in school, Rose, age fourteen, and Comfort at home. The Ciccoss live in an isolated section where there are few other Italian-American families.

Comfort did not hesitate to tell the social worker how the boys bothered her. The worker observed Comfort's deep olive skin and spectacles which no doubt had something to do with the boys' choice of bad names. Suddenly Comfort stopped short in her talking and struggled for minutes against tears. Finally it came, "I'm so scared. I'm scared all the time that some of the kids will find out . . . My mother is in the state hospital again. She's not crazy. She's not! She's not! Don't ever tell them." And so it became clear why more than with other pre-adolescent girls these torments really hurt.

Case work service here was a longer job than with Peggy and Judson. The worker talked with Comfort every week for awhile, and then occa-

sionally, discussing how she could pretend that the boys did not bother her, so they would stop. When she began to watch, she could see that they tried to bother other girls, too, but the girls did not let them. In her quiet way Comfort loved to talk. Sometimes she would find an occasion to reprimand the worker, "Don't you remember what we said last Friday!!!" Woe unto social workers who have too many children to remember all these little things. There was talk of how each job in the home was covered. Comfort wanted recognition for what she did at home. Mr. Cicco appreciated it and she knew she was special with him when he would say it was a good thing she was so big and he didn't have any babies around anymore. However, Comfort seemed to be saying that a little girl needs a woman, too, when she complained that her father did not know how to help her decide what clothes she should buy for herself.

The worker made a few visits to see Mr. Cicco and find out if he needed and wanted any kind of help at this time. Considering that there was no woman in the house, things were very well managed. He wanted some follow-up after his wife came home this time in hope that she might stay better. This was planned. Then he said in his poor English, "You talk to my Comfort sometimes. It makes her feel good." In this way the social worker's role with the child was supported by the father.

Mrs. Andrews was from the beginning very important to Comfort as she had been to the older Cicco children she had had before. Part of the reason that Comfort did not talk freely to Mrs. Andrews was that the teacher was so close to the whole group. The social worker's talks with Comfort aimed at helping her to have confidence to talk to her teachers. The group in school which Comfort has enjoyed the most has been home-making class, and Mrs. Andrews gave some explanation to the homemaking teacher so that she could make this as helpful an experience as possible. At a luncheon Comfort's class served for a group of school social workers in November. Comfort was the hostess and she mustered poise such as had never before been hers.

The plan to have help for Mrs. Cicco after her return home did not need to be arranged, for one morning last winter she died at the hospital. This development meant that the worker stepped in again for a time, seeing both Comfort and Mr. Cicco. Comfort came to see the worker herself wanting to tell all about what had happened and how her friends had acted knowing now where her mother was before she died. Mr. Cicco wanted to talk too, but again only as he might to a friend of the family not asking for any special help. Actually things were no different at home from what they were before his wife died. He had done his best and in his own way he could continue till his children were grown.

JAMES

On March 30, 1944, the principal of our high school, suspended Jim, age not quite sixteen, from school and referred him to the school social worker. The principal had taken a poll of the teachers' opinions which revealed that Jim had a way of completely riling his teachers, five of whom were men. They thought that he was off on the wrong foot from the time he entered the previous fall. He was quiet to the point that some called him withdrawn but he was defiant in the way he cut school or cut classes and offered no explanation. He was thought to be dull, uninterested and lazy. He was failing everything.

Early next morning Jim's mother, Mrs. Leo, appeared at the social worker's office to say he had not come home all night. She had called the principal and she was very angry. She thought she never understood Jim. Of course, she had little time to think about it with nine children to take care of. Louis was the oldest; then James. Admittedly she had trouble on her hands with Mr. Leo, too, who always had to be the boss and never had had any time for Jim. She could just see what would happen. Jim would come home and then his father would have to give him a "good beating." Jim would have nothing to say, (not that it would make any difference if he did say something), and the next thing she knew Jim would be doing something else that he shouldn't do. Maybe Mr. Leo was right, she thought aloud, "Jim ought to have enough sense to look at how Louis acts and learn a lesson for himself."

The social worker talked with Mr. Leo that same evening. In the meantime Jim had come home and in spite of Mrs. Leo's entreaties bolstered by the social worker, Jim got the beating. Mr. Leo with his Old World ideas and his broken English poured out his complaints. There was just nothing that he would have but for the court to be called in and Jim to be sent away. "It's like a rotten apple. If you've got one bad one, you can't have him around to spoil the others." Mr. Leo substantiated how he had made big sacrifices for his family. He had had no education himself and had come to the United States at fifteen and shifted entirely for himself from that time on.

The one thing the social worker seemed to accomplish in this interview with Mr. Leo was to get him to refer the boy to the worker in a constructive way. Mr. Leo knew that what Jim said was not to be reported back to the father later. He told Jim to talk. Jim talked. It wasn't like him. He had never done such a thing before. He was scared but it did not stop him. He brought out extreme resentment toward Louis who actually seemed to be encouraged by the family in his childish abuse of Jim. Jim also expressed

resentment toward his father. In Jim's mind this was a cruel world anyway. There was little or no self-respect or confidence left in the boy. What did it matter what he did? Nobody cared. Least of all, Jim.

With Jim there seemed to be a job for the social worker to do in three areas, with the family's attitudes, the faculty's attitudes, and most of all with Jim's own. There was a period of three months when the worker concentrated on these. The family attitudes did not change more than a very little. The father would seem to go along on a plan but then he would always rescind his consent. Mrs. Leo did not stand her ground against Mr. Leo. Moreover, there had to be an emergency or the social worker did not really have an audience with the parents. With the faculty there was a different situation. They could see that Jim had reasons to be angry and no natural outlets for his resentment. They were pleased with a psychological study which showed not only good average intelligence but unusual performance ability. They made all kinds of exceptions in program to fit the boy's interests and abilities. In two months every teacher was reporting improvement.

Probably this consideration proved to Jim that people in the high school were interested after all. In preparation for his return to school, the social worker talked with him several times. After the pressure of the first emergency was gone, Jim did not talk as much of his inner feelings. When Jim, his family and the social worker would work out some plan, and then Mr. Leo would queer the whole thing and they would have to start over again, no doubt Jim felt that at least there was someone on his side. Jim had had his troubles in elementary school, too, but in the new environment of some 1500 people he had felt lost altogether. He needed someone to pull up his self-esteem, until satisfactory adjustment in school had a chance to take hold with him. This was the social worker's job.

By June Jim had work in a grocery store after school hours, and in the next eighteen months the worker's only contacts with him were during her shopping trips there. The manager liked Jim because, as he said, "He does what I tell him and I always know where he is." For some time Jim had been itching to get into service. He was pretty disgusted when the war was over last summer before his father had consented to his enlistment. However, he had long since made up his mind to put up with the family restrictions until he was eighteen when he would be on his own. Jim spent his eighteenth birthday last month at an Army training center. He enlisted with two and a half years full high school credit for work in line with his ability. The high school teachers do not even remember now that, in the spring of 1944, they had given up hope for Jim.

As I said in introducing the cases of Comfort and James, I would like to discuss the role of the social worker in her direct work with these children. Comfort needed a mother substitute and this was recognized by the teacher. The social worker's job was not to replace this very desirable contribution of the teacher but to make it more useful to the child. Also it needed to be supplemented for awhile. Comfort needed someone all her own at the outset. Having gained some security and confidence she can depend on her teacher more now.

James was in a bad spot with his family; but being fifteen he had more possibility of coping with the situation on his own. He needed someone to tide him over till he was mature enough to manage. To be sure, Jim also had to get some things straightened out in his mind before he could get going at all.

In my experience, children who need help use the social worker's service gladly and with lots of participation. They have few questions about doing so. The social worker is a part of the child's school and is accepted as such.

An area of school social work which happened not to come into these four cases much, is cooperation with other community social services. I spoke of the use of the Brownies for Peggy, the first little girl, and of the YMCA play group for Judson. Both Mrs. Mazurak and Mr. Cicco had had previous help from case work agencies. This is a kind of situation for which a school may often have responsibility. The agency would offer service again if it were wanted. In the meantime the school social worker keeps a "weather eye" on the situation, ready to advise the family to use help again if it appears necessary.

The thing which is notably lacking in these cases is a referral to a case work agency. It has been estimated that one third of the problems brought to the attention of school social workers which need more than a brief service, can be referred to community case work agencies for help. This presupposes that there are adequate services available. We have to keep in mind, however, that even with the most skillful assistance on the part of the school social worker, there will always be some families who will not use a case work agency even though they need its help. Sometimes they will use a more limited kind of service from the school's own worker in behalf of their children and then it is well if that can be provided. When a referral to a community agency is effected the school social worker continues to cooperate from the school end, interpreting to the teachers what service is being offered outside and helping them to play their part in line with this.

Through the use of case material, I have attempted to show the place

of trained social workers in schools. With a goal of the greatest possible development of each child, modern education is emerging as the biggest single social service to children in America today. The fact that professional social workers are being accepted by modern schools for what they can contribute to the schools' fulfillment of this goal, is one of the major challenges to the social work profession in our times.

DISCUSSION

By CARMELITE JANVIER

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New Orleans, Louisiana

There are many angles from which this paper could be discussed and many ways in which the material could be re-emphasized. The paper is full of meat and presents skillfully many of the important aspects of the school social worker's job. However, I shall use the time I have to discuss a little further three of the aspects of the work of the school social worker or visiting teacher which seem to me to have significant and unique value, not only for the individual child and the school system which is trying to meet his educational and social needs, but for the whole community in which the school system functions and the school child lives.

The first of these unique values is the fact that the school social worker, because of her position on the staff of the school, has a chance to begin her case work on problems at the time when the problems themselves are in their early stages. She does not have to wait, as is true of so many other social workers, until there is an actual family or mental or social breakdown in order to begin her work. She can get at problems when they first begin to show themselves in the child's school adjustment, and does not have to wait until destructive patterns of adjustment have been deeply laid nor until family disintegration has taken place.

The teacher with vision and imagination, spending five hours a day, five days a week with children, can note the first symptoms of trouble and by calling in the school social worker can make it possible for her to begin case work at the point at which case work can be most effective.

In Peggy, Judson and Comfort we see three children beginning to show signs of making undesirable adjustments to the difficulties they were encountering. Not one of the problems had developed serious proportions when they were referred to the school social worker, but it takes little imagination to realize what might have happened if Peggy had gone on for a year or two longer running away from what she did not enjoy and never having a chance to build her social relations with other children, if Judson had gone on making up to himself with hostility toward other children for an environmental background filled with natural beauty and empty of human affection, and if little frightened Comfort had drawn away completely into her shell.

The school social worker's job is important to the community as she

can work on problems in their early stages and prevent much unhappiness which need never be. Also, when we realize that the schools have contact with such a large proportion of all of the children in the community, we see the almost limitless possibilities for preventive work on the part of the school social worker or visiting teacher who can work with little problems before they grow into big ones.

The second aspect of the school social worker's job which is so frequently misunderstood that it can stand re-emphasizing here, is the triangular relationship between the teacher, the child and the school social worker. The school social worker does not compete with the teacher in her relationship to the child, but rather, supplements and re-enforces that relationship. In no instance does the school social worker, aware of what she is doing and basing her work on an understanding of underlying factors in the child's problem, stand between the child and the teacher but rather she directs her efforts toward making the teacher-child relationship more constructive and satisfying to the child.

This is clearly brought out in the cases of both Peggy and Comfort. For Peggy, the visiting teacher, or school social worker, at the school was just a temporary connecting link giving the child the help she needed until she could establish her own relationships with the teacher and the other children. When this was started, the school social worker withdrew and as far as Peggy was concerned, was no more seen. In the case of Comfort, we see the school social worker filling a need which the teacher could not fill because of her relationship to the class as a group. In that case the child needed a friend who was her friend without any responsibility for the group as a whole.

The effective use of her relationship to the teacher is tremendously important in determining just how effective the work of the school social worker can be with children. It is through his relationships with the classroom teacher that the child learns and develops in the school atmosphere. The skillful school social worker never competes with the teacher for that relationship. When both teacher and school social worker are aware of the ways in which they can supplement each other in helping the child work through his difficulties, the possibilities for service to children and families are limitless.

The one other aspect of the work of the school social worker that I want to comment on briefly is the strategic position in which she stands for interpreting to the school and the community, their responsibility for providing the basic services and resources which all children need. A child with a problem is a child for whom someone in the home, the community

or the school itself has failed. The school social worker in meeting these evidences of failure as they affect individual children has a chance and a responsibility for pointing out how such failures or gaps in services are affecting all children in the community. Peggy could get the social life she needed through the Brownies and Judson could get it through the Day Camp because those services were available and the school social worker called them into play for the children who needed them. She also has the responsibility for pointing out the services and resources which are lacking and helping to bring them into being.

In her paper, Miss Winberg has given us a chance to get a comprehensive and thoughtful understanding of the work of the school social worker or visiting teacher. We are grateful to her for the effective and delightful manner in which she has done it.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Announcement is made of the opening of the Executive Office of the National Association of School Social Workers at 1367 Clover Road, Rochester 10, New York, with Mrs. Ruth East as Executive Secretary and Miss Margaret FitzGibbon as Clerical Secretary. It is hoped that eventually a more central location can be secured, such as Chicago, Washington or New York City. Files of the Association are being coordinated in this office. Inquiries regarding school social work programs and requests for printed material which is available may be directed there.

HAVE YOU READ

PSYCHIATRY FOR SOCIAL WORKERS *by* Lawson G. Lowrey, M. D.—Dr.

Lowrey not only gives us background material but points the way for application of that material in our every day job.

WHY CAN'T THEY READ? *by* Amy Porter, in *Collier's* for November 30, 1946—St. Louis is finding out why children of normal intelligence can't read and what can be done about it. The prevention of reading problems has many implications for a school social worker.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership in a professional organization is a strengthening factor for the individual practicing within that profession. This is as true for the school social worker as it has long been for members of other professions. National Association of School Social Workers has members in 34 states and in Hawaii.

All members receive the National Association of School Social Workers Bulletin and other materials such as reprints, book lists, conference programs, notices, and other publicity. Membership is determined by the training and experience of the applicant. There are four types of membership:

Contributing \$5.00 per year; Senior \$3.00 per year; Junior \$2.00 per year; Associate \$1.00 per year. The first three classifications have voting rights and senior members are eligible to hold office.

Applications for membership and a statement of membership requirements may be obtained from the Membership Chairman, Miss Helen E. Weston, 13 South Fitzhugh Street, Rochester 4, New York.

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Copies of previously published Bulletins and additional copies of this issue may be obtained from the N.A.S.S.W. Executive Secretary—Mrs. Ruth East, 1367 Clover Road, Rochester 10, New York. Price varies from 5c to 20c depending upon date of publication.

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We also have some pamphlets—reprints—and reading lists pertaining to school social work. Lists of MATERIAL AVAILABLE can be secured upon request.

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Changes of address should reach the office of the Executive Secretary as soon as possible.

